

## LEAVING MODESTO EARLY

Chrome spigots  
with hot and cold water  
fresh towels  
and pink soap bars  
mattresses that bounce  
back

Motel 6  
is a way of life  
undreamed of by a woman  
who spread a homemade  
quilt  
beneath a pepper tree in 1934

and slept like a baby  
while the nursemaid moon

watched her all night

## MECHANIC PHILOSOPHER

Joe Vernon works on  
poor neighbors' cars cheap  
change the oil free  
for most of them

wipes his hands on  
an old undershirt  
answers a young boy's  
question with

I ain't Romeo  
I wouldn't stab myself  
to death  
for no woman

but I think better  
of 'em  
than most men do